



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING DEPARTMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 12, 2006
TO: Raymond Giometti, Chair
CC: Commission Members
FROM: Rebecca Lind, Planning Manager
SUBJECT: **Highlands Redevelopment Study – Phase I Land Use Analysis**

ISSUES:

How much of the study area can realistically be redeveloped within the first ten years of this plan and where should the initial focus be?

What land use assumptions should the City use for future development?

BACKGROUND:

Initial studies of the Highlands were begun in 2000 and focused on commercial redevelopment as the catalyst for changing the area. It was believed then that if the commercial revitalization were successful, residential redevelopment would follow. Unfortunately, commercial redevelopment was dependent on one or two key players, and without their voluntary participation, efforts to revitalize the commercial sector fell through. This led to the current effort that began in 2005.

Unlike the previous effort, the current one focuses more on the initial revitalization of the residential sector and a belief that by increasing the number of resident owners in the area and improving the quality of both housing and public amenities, the commercial sector will follow in order to retain their customer base, which presumably, would otherwise shop elsewhere.

ANALYSIS:

The area selected for initial focus is primarily on the north side of Sunset Blvd. NE and the area east of Edmonds Avenue NE and south of NE 16th Street. The heart of this area is currently comprised of World War II era duplexes, the majority of which were built to house temporary workers at the Paccar and Boeing plants down the hill to the west. A majority of these structures have deferred maintenance and are owned by absentee owners. This area was also selected so as to build upon the momentum already established by the new McKnight Middle School, Fire Station No. 12, and Hauser

Terrace Senior Housing. In many ways this area will serve as a model for what happens elsewhere in the study area. As pointed out in earlier briefings, the focus of this phase of redevelopment will be on ground oriented housing types such as townhouses and low rise multi-family units located within easy walking distance of convenience retail and other services. Streets would be improved with sidewalks and pedestrian oriented amenities such as benches, street lighting and landscaping conducive to walking.

The attached matrix gives a breakdown of land use in net acres within Phase I and includes the densities and Floor Area Ratios used to calculate number of units and square footage of new commercial

Land Use Breakdown

As can be seen from the attached matrix Phase I is 80.24 acres in size with the majority of this area devoted to future townhouse development with 26.42 acres. The next largest land use category is multi-family housing at 12.77 acres. Mixed-Use housing follows at 10.48 acres, under this scenario, mixed use commercial would account for 6.99 acres, and public and open space at 8.93 acres. Neighborhood retail/service is 4.10 acres, cottage housing is 2.36 acres, and public uses such as Fire Station 12 and the Highlands Public Library are 2.79 acres. After deleting alleys and public walkways, the net overall developable area drops down to 74.84 acres.

Residential

Residential development, at 80% of capacity, under this scenario would provide 1,232 additional units assuming the 497 existing units are replaced/ or retained. This many new units would also create an estimated need for neighborhood parkland. Phase I is currently showing parks and open space of 6.30 acres.

Commercial

Commercial development, at an assumed FAR of 0.75 is estimated to result in 228,254 square feet over the next ten years. Neighborhood oriented retail, located primarily near the intersection of Kirkland Avenue NE and NE 12th Street would comprise approximately 60% of this new development. A small amount of this use is also located at the intersection of Edmonds Avenue SE and Sunset Blvd NE, considered one of the gateways into the new neighborhood.

Parks and Open Space

Neighborhood parks to serve the new housing developed in Phase I are provided in a couple of different ways. One is more or less traditional park of 3.5 acres, located along Harrington Avenue NE, immediately south of NE 12th Street, across from Fire Station 12. And the second is a lineal "green" street/mall along Jefferson Avenue NE of 2.8 acres. The portion north Fire Station 12 would be primarily landscaped with native grasses and shrubs and would serve as a secondary stormwater retention/treatment facility as well as pedestrian walkway. It would treat surface water runoff from adjacent townhouse development and nearby streets.